AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

Please rewrite the Abstract on page 22 as follows:

ABSTRACT

A method of pharmaceutical therapy ~~comprising the co-administration of any form of~~ includes co-administering: (A) interferon or ~~any~~ derivative thereof with a low dose of (B) ribavirin (~~less than~~≤ 400 mg /day or ~~less than~~≤ 6 mg/kg/day), or related compound, where ~~the ribavirin or related compound~~(B) provides a clinically effective blood level in ~~the~~ portal circulation but ~~a~~ less than clinically effective blood level in ~~the~~ peripheral circulation, ~~to~~ thereby ~~provide~~providing a systemic effect of interferon throughout the body but a selective effect of ribavirin in the liver. The method also provides for ~~the~~ co-administration of (A)~~any form of interferon or any derivative thereof~~ with a high dose of (B)~~ribavirin~~ (preferably ~~from~~ 400-800 mg/day)~~, or related compound~~, where ~~the ribavirin or related compound~~(B) is administered as a slow-release formulation ~~such that it also~~to provides a sustained virologic response ~~in a patient~~ and reduced side effects. The method also provides for ~~the co-administration of an~~co-adminstering (C) antioxidant or other membrane protective agent with both ~~the~~ interferon and ribavirin such that the hepatoprotective activity of ~~the antioxidant or other membrane protective agent~~(C) complements the virucidal effect of ~~the~~ interferon and ribavirin. ~~The antioxidant or other membrane protective agent~~(C) may be administered as a systemic or ~~a~~ low-dose, slow-release, liver-selective formulation.